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# HEMI-SYNC® USES IN MILITARY SETTINGS: EDUCATION AND COUNSELING

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Several intensive experiences in Army military training programs have demonstrated positive results using the Hemi-Sync technology. The instructional and therapeutic examples discussed are perhaps limited, yet give some notion of how Hemi-Sync can be adapted to enhance competent instruction and treatment. Training studies mentioned here were conducted under U.S. Army sanctions.

## Audio-Guided Stress Reduction

The Hemi-Sync technology was identified to help support training during early 1982 by creating a relaxed yet attentive state. A plan was developed to evaluate the potential of the technology for stress reduction and the acceleration or enhancement of training performance.

The basic broadcasters course (BBC) for lower-ranked enlisted personnel of the Defense Information School (DINFOS) at Fort Harrison was selected as a plausible test unit. The broadcasters training involves conditions of time pressure and high skill requirements. Test students generally displayed a number of positive differences in stress reactions and performance responses over the stress control group and the course-performance control group.

Further study and use of Hemi-Sync were recommended in the area of accelerated training, although the 1982 evaluation was not wholly conclusive. Based on the evaluated student acceptance and DINFOS faculty observation, enlisted students can expect accelerated learning experiences through the awareness of relaxation, favorable changes in actual performance, or enhanced motivation. A more successful application of Hemi-Sync in a properly designed instruction program can occur if the evaluated tapes and performance measures are precisely adapted to support given training objectives. The training effectiveness of the technology, as evaluated, suggested that where enlisted student performance met or exceeded standards the technology can serve to induce relaxation and lessen the degree of task stress, i.e., less effort and more efficient work.

In adapting Hemi-Sync to the broadcasting course requirements, students and faculty suggested it as an alternative counseling strategy for rapid acquisition training when it cannot fully be incorporated into the regular schedule. If several students per class were retained with the help of this technology during one year, a tangible cost reduction would result.

Additional interest in Hemi-Sync applications was expressed *in A U.S. Army Science Board Report* (July 1983) dealing with future applications of training technology. Another application was reported earlier through Army military intelligence channels (March 1983).

**BBC Student Counseling Activities**

After the preceding work with the DINFOS BBC, several faculty members and administrative heads recognized the potential of Hemi-Sync-based materials as counseling support. Though the use of Hemi-Sync tapes was accepted in the school program, it was understood that each course could not have Hemi-Sync materials specifically prepared. Several tapes were seen to be useful in more than one academic setting, while others were restricted to the BBC coursework.

Students using Hemi-Sync in the BBC course followed directed tape use, while students seeking counseling were given minimal verbal direction. Most of the students were “recycles,” or those repeating some part of the course, so did not need lengthy orientation. The counseled students readily acknowledged the tapes helped them sleep, study, prepare for class more efficiently, control nervousness, organize activities better, and retain more information.

Excepting the Audio-Guided Stress Reduction study, in which a relatively small number of students were observed, the counseling of a few students per class across eight years (1983 to 1990) has amounted to a sizable sample. Conservatively, the students benefiting from counseling number at least 180, probably closer to 200. Given the number of students advised by faculty and counseled to fulfill course requirements, the contribution of Hemi-Sync appears to have helped the students, both academically and emotionally, and protected the school’s financial investment by graduating these 200 students during the last eight years.

**A Language Training Venture**

A language training program was introduced at a western U.S. Army site using an inventive blend of Hemi-Sync and the Georgi Lozanov language teaching method. Two female teachers began a language training program designed to bring refresher material to specially trained combat-oriented male soldiers. Classes were designed to move the students quickly from their own language capabilities to a higher, but common, level of group proficiency in the conversational use of the chosen language(s). Both teachers were excellent language instructors who used some appropriate text materials and unobtrusively presented the Hemi-Sync and music as a minor innovation.

Hoping to attain at least expected language proficiency, and to enhance the learning environment with the added sounds, the teachers observed that learning was changed in a subtle, but noticeable, way. As the students followed directions, the teachers became aware that the atmosphere was relaxing and the students were more spontaneous in their responses. Enthusiasm was evidenced as class schedules were met and assignments were quickly accomplished. The Hemi-Sync and music seemed to be creating an environment where the students could unconsciously concentrate better and with less tension. Students having completed the language training did not later report any operational difficulties during their many foreign and highly stressful assignments. In fact, they consider their language training as one of their most rewarding military experiences.

**Auditory Guidance in Officer-Level Training**

Another test unit was selected for analysis and evaluation. A Public Affairs Officer Course (PAOC) requiring complex behaviors was selected at the Defense Information School (DINFOS). The public affairs officers' training and job involve various pressures and skill demands across military community relations, public affairs communication and media, and broadcasting, and could be affected favorably by technology that reduces stress and enhances learning. This test was considered feasible by DINFOS in view of the uncomplicated technology, lack of class schedule disruptions, and test objectives. Three objectives were evaluated using the Hemi-Sync *Progressive Accelerated Learning (PAL)* cassette album.

Positive behaviors associated with tape use were revealed in improved responses for instructional areas and task performances (which affected training exercise results) and performance reactions. Twenty-five percent of the students reported that they experienced unusual mental and/or physical changes during tape use. Although a statistically significant number did not report such experiences, it is significant that some students can experience unusual changes that are personally inspiring.

Throughout the study, numerous student discussions and comments were exchanged, suggesting a largely positive behavioral experience with Hemi-Sync. Students individually reported that they sensed the tapes gave them the ability to do more in less time, and to organize assignments more efficiently. No mention was ever made of tapes adding to the course's learning difficulty, but improved study effort and relaxation did seem to result. Because of the course and time demands, most of the students did not use all six tapes. Several tapes were largely rated as "not at all" helpful or "not at all" assisting study improvement. This may not indicate tapes were ineffective, rather, that the tapes were not used enough to evaluate them accurately, or that they did not help performance already at a superior level. Generally, attention and readiness to perform assigned tasks were described as more focused. Where a few students reported negative reactions, they were counteracted by revised tape use and alleviating personal psychophysical symptoms.

Where the tapes were satisfactorily applied with a range of success, those students with stated interest or need appeared to benefit most. Those who volunteered to resolve some curiosity may have profited only by an accidental foray into some aspect of altered consciousness. It is recommended that, when feasible, the tapes be used in a training context with added emphasis on counseling or self-development coaching to make individual and course training objectives fully complementary.

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